

## February Article

### Planning to Send Your Child to Summer Camp? Now is the Time to Sign Up!

It may seem strange to think about summer care in this time of year, but if you don't, many summer camps and programs may fill up! To begin exploring your options and locating summer programs that best meet the unique needs of your family, take advantage of the Work and Family Resource and Referral Service—an employer-paid benefit. Whether you are interested in day or residential camps, programs with a sports or academic focus, or camps that cater to children with special needs, highly trained specialists can provide detailed referrals with information on cost, activities offered, staff-to-child ratios, and more. Plus, you can receive comprehensive educational materials and checklists to help you narrow your choices and make educated decisions.

Choosing a summer camp requires careful thought and research. You will need to consider your child's age and maturity level, interests and skills and, of course, your own needs and preferences in terms of budget, location, and other special requirements. Younger children, for example, may be more comfortable with a day camp while older children may enjoy the adventure of a residential (sleep-away) camp away from home for a few weeks. When choosing summer camps, discuss the different options with your child, and consider the following questions:

- What type of camp do you prefer (day, residential, combination)?
- How far away should the camp be from your home?
- What type of surroundings does your child prefer (country, ocean, mountains, lakeside)?
- What size camp would you and your child be most comfortable with (many camps average 250 campers)?
- Would your child be more comfortable at a coed or single-sex camp?
- What age range works best for your child?
- How long would you like the camp sessions to be?
- How much can you afford to spend on camp?
- What type of camp do you think would be best for your child (general, specialty, gifted and talented camp, special needs camp)?
- What types of activities do you want your child to participate in?

Plus, the Work and Family Resource and Referral Service can help you find a variety of other summer programs, including:

- Recreational Programs
- Sports Programs
- Academic Programs

#### Plan Early for Summer Care!

The State of California offers the Work and Family Resource and Referral Service, which provides information and referrals to help you with your summer care needs.

Log on to [www.lifecare.com](http://www.lifecare.com) to:

- Access information and referrals on residential and day camps, recreational programs, and summer care options for teens.
- Read articles and tips on packing, avoiding homesickness, outdoor safety—and more!

New web users enter company code: **california**. For assistance logging on to the web site, contact the Help Desk at 888-604-9565

In addition, highly trained specialists are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide information and referrals to summer camps or programs in your area—and nationwide. Simply call **866-896-1935** (or 800-873-1322 if you are hearingimpaired) to discuss your needs with a specialist.

- Fine Arts Programs
- Summer Options for Teens
- Programs for Gifted and Talented Children
- And Much More!



Highly trained specialists are available 24 hours a day to help you assess your needs and provide personalized information and referrals to summer care options in your local area or nationwide. Plus, ask the specialist for your complimentary copy of *A LifeCare® Guide: Summer Care*, which contains comprehensive tips and information on summer care options, as well as a “Summer Camp Evaluation Checklist” that will help you ask the right questions when interviewing camp directors.

This information was excerpted from *A LifeCare® Guide: Summer Care*. Copyright© 2002 LifeCare®, Inc. All rights reserved. To read or request a free copy of this publication, visit [www.lifecare.com](http://www.lifecare.com) (new users enter company code: **california**). For assistance logging on to the web site, contact the Help Desk at 888-604-9565. Or, if you prefer to speak personally with a specialist, call **866-896-1935** (800-873-1322 if you are hearing-impaired).

## February E-mail/Intranet Reminder

### Does Your Child Have Special Needs? The Work and Family Resource and Referral Service Can Help!

If your child has been diagnosed with a special need, the State of California offers the Work and Family Resource and Referral Service that can provide information, and referrals to support you and your family. For instance, consider the following strategies offered by this employer-paid benefit:

- Learn as much as possible about your child’s special needs .
- Continually evaluate your child's strengths and weaknesses .
- Keep a file of all records pertaining to your child's diagnosis including medical reports; test results and evaluations; correspondence from your service coordinator, doctors, therapists, and others; etc.
- Encourage your child to gain as much independence as possible by participating in the same activities as other children according to his or her abilities. For example, if your child has difficulty speaking, encourage him or her to communicate as much as possible; do not communicate for him or her.
- Attend support groups and seek out other parents of children with special needs. Sharing experiences with others may reassure you, and help you assist your child.

For additional tips including referrals to educational resources or support groups in your local area, log on to [www.lifecare.com](http://www.lifecare.com) (new users enter company code: **california**). For assistance logging on to the web site, contact the Help Desk at 888-604-9565. If you prefer to speak with a highly trained specialist, call **866-896-1935** (or 800-873-1322 if you are hearingimpaired) any time of the day or night.

# Plan Now for Summer Care!

Believe it or not, most summer camps and programs fill up early. Now is the time to start planning for your summer care needs. The State of California offers the Work and Family Resource and Referral Service, which provides counseling, education, and referrals to help you find summer care programs that best suit your family's interests and unique needs, including:

- ♦ Residential (Sleep-Away) Camps
- ♦ Day Camps
- ♦ Recreational Programs
- ♦ Sports Camps
- ♦ Academic Programs
- ♦ Fine Arts Programs
- ♦ Camps for Children With Special Needs
- ♦ Summer Options for Teens
- ♦ Programs for Gifted and Talented Children

***Plus, this valuable employer-paid benefit provides comprehensive educational materials and checklists to help you narrow your choices and make educated decisions!***

**Access this valuable benefit online at [www.lifecare.com](http://www.lifecare.com)**

New users, enter company code: california

For assistance logging on to the web site, contact the Help Desk at 888-604-9565

**Or call 866-896-1935 — 24 hours a day/7 days a week!**

**If you are hearing impaired, call 800-873-1322**